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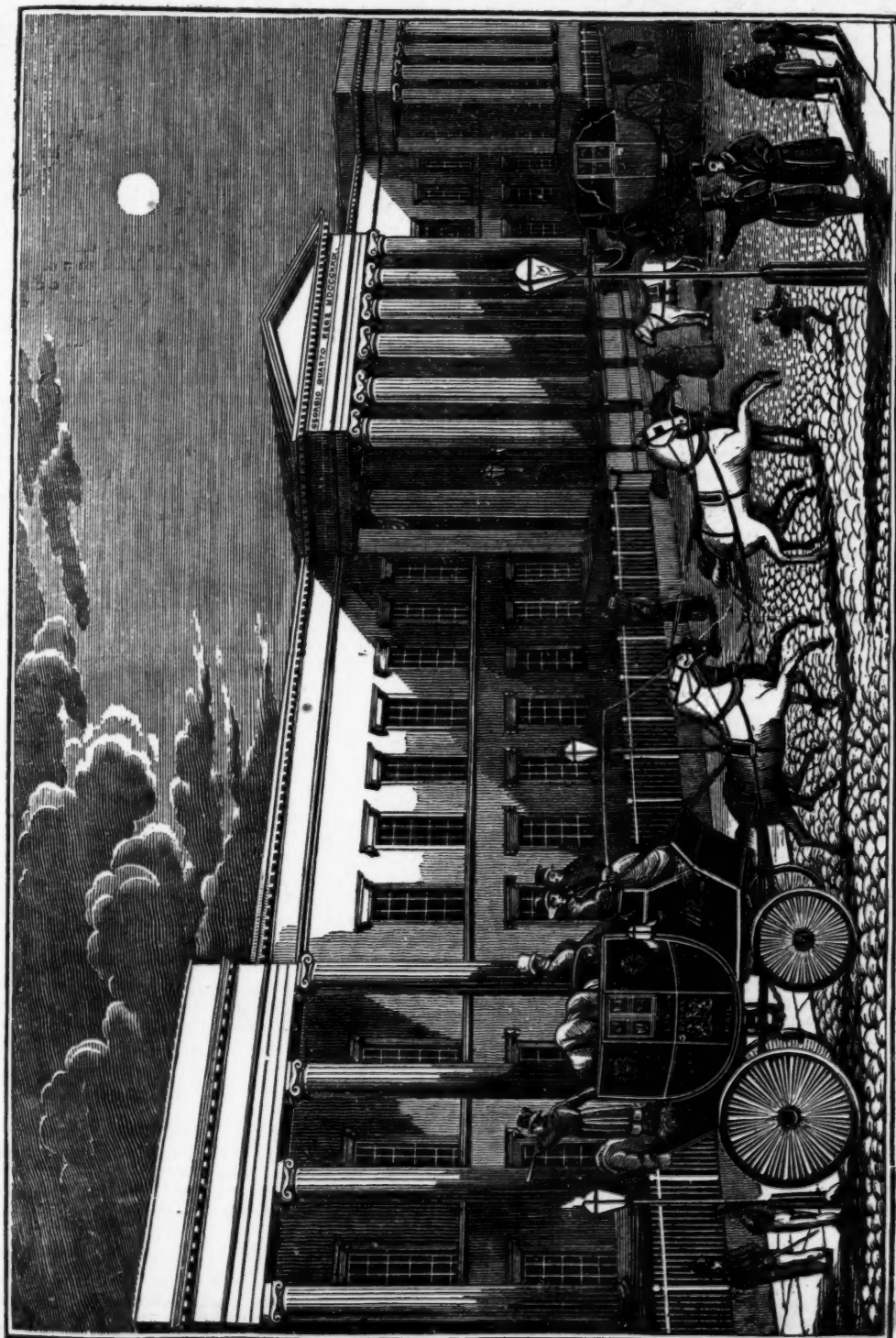
DECEMBER

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PRICE
ONE PENNY.



UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE COMMITTEE OF GENERAL LITERATURE AND EDUCATION,
APPOINTED BY THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.



THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON.

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

THE term *Post*, as applied to the conveyance of letters, is derived from the Latin word *positus*, placed; the horses which conveyed them having been placed or posted from distance to distance.

The plan of despatching letters by a regular conveyance, and at stated times, from one part of the country to another, only reached its present state of perfection so lately as the year 1784. Letters and packets of importance were in ancient times forwarded by means of men on horseback, or on foot, and this practice still continues in many parts of the world; but from the uncertain times at which they started, as well as from their being only applied to the purposes of Government, they may more properly be called Couriers than Posts.

In some parts of the east they avail themselves of pigeons, these birds being known to return instinctively to their mates, at whatever distance they may be from them, as a means of forwarding information from one place to another. In former times, the Consul of Alexandretta used to send news daily, in five hours' time, to Aleppo, by means of pigeons; though these two places are three days' journey on horseback apart. The Dutch also employed the same mode of sending intelligence in several instances, particularly at the siege of Haerlem, when information was conveyed to the besieged of the approach of relief, at a time when they were on the point of surrendering.

In point of fact, Posts on their present plan, that is for the accommodation of all, are but a modern invention. In England they were first established in the reign of Charles the First, though something of the sort appears to have existed much earlier, since an Act of Parliament, dated 1548, fixes the rate of post-horses at one penny per mile. Under Elizabeth, in 1581, mention is made of the office of chief Post-master of England, and in 1631, of that of Post-master for foreign parts: this latter office appears to have been first created by James the First.

In 1633, a Letter-office was erected for England and Scotland, under the direction of Thomas Withering, and certain rates of postage were settled; but from some abuses in the execution of his office, Withering was removed, and the business was placed under the control of the principal Secretary of State. Shortly after the breaking out of the civil war, the outline of the present more extended and regular plan seems to have been conceived by Mr. Edmond Prideaux, who was appointed Attorney-general after the murder of King Charles. He first established a weekly conveyance of letters to all parts of the nation, and saved the public the charge of maintaining Post-masters, to the amount of £7000 per annum. The profits of his office appear to have been so great as to have excited an attempt on the part of the city of London, to form a rival establishment, but the affair was set at rest by a vote of the House of Commons, declaring the office to be at the disposal of parliament.

In 1657, a regular Post Office was established by the Protector and his Parliament, on nearly the same plan as that since adopted, and the rates of postage then charged were continued unaltered till the reign of Queen Anne.

After the restoration, in the year 1660, the Post Office was first established by statute, when the Commons claimed the privilege of franking their letters; but this claim was afterwards dropped, on a private assurance from the crown, that the privilege should be allowed the members. Accordingly, a warrant was constantly issued to the Post-master-general, directing the allowance thereof to the extent of two ounces in weight, till at length, it was expressly confirmed by an Act of Parliament of the 4th of George the Third, which added also, many new regulations. Other restrictions were afterwards imposed in the 35th year of the same reign, when it was settled that "no letter sent by any member shall be exempted from the payment of postage, unless he shall be actually in the post town, or within the limits of its delivery of letters, or within twenty miles of such post town, on the day, or the day before the day, on which the letters shall be put into the office." The number was also limited to the sending of ten, and the receiving of fifteen each day.

In 1654, the revenues of the Post Office were farmed by John Manly, Esq., for the yearly sum of 10,000*l*. In 1665, the Office was settled on the Duke of York, and its produce amounted to 21,500*l*. Thus, in little more than ten years, the amount was doubled, and it still continued to increase until the reign of William and Mary, when it was consider-

ably influenced by the state of the country, its revenue during the eight years of war only averaging 67,222*l*. a-year, and producing, in the succeeding four years of peace, an average of 82,319*l*.

On the Union of England with Scotland, in 1710, a General Post Office was established by Act of Parliament, which included, besides Great Britain and Ireland, our West India and American Colonies. This extension increased the revenue to 111,461*l*. What portion of this sum was produced by the respective countries does not appear, but there is reason to believe it was almost entirely Irish and English, for even so late as between 1730 and 1740, the Post was only sent three days a-week, between Edinburgh and London, and on one occasion conveyed only a single letter, which was for an Edinburgh banker named Ramsay!

In 1784, a most remarkable change took place in the mode of conveying the letters. Till this time the mails had been sent by carts, or post-boys on horseback, a mode attended with danger and delay; but in this year, John Palmer, Esq., recommended a plan to Government, calculated to increase the revenue and accommodate the public. His proposal was acceded to; he was rewarded with a large sum of money, and was afterwards appointed Comptroller-General of the Post Office. His plan was the establishment of the present Mail Coaches, which were to leave London at 8 o'clock every evening precisely, to travel at the rate of 8 miles an hour, including stoppages, so that their arrival at any place in their route might be calculated to a certainty. They were allowed to carry four passengers inside and two outside, thus offering accommodation for persons whose business required expedition and certainty; for at this time the stage coaches were much inferior in speed and comfort to what they are at present.

The first Mail Coach was established to Bristol, in 1784. From this moment the prosperity of the Post Office increased rapidly. The revenue, which, at its first institution was not more than 5000*l*. a-year, and which, after the revolution of two centuries, only produced, in 1783, 146,000*l*. annually, yielded, thirty years afterwards, nearly 1,700,000*l*., yet the expense is now at a less rate per mile than upon the old plan. The total amount of the annual receipts is now about 2,400,000*l*. and the net revenue about 1,500,000*l*.

The General Post Office was originally established in Cloak-lane, near Dowgate-hill, whence it was removed to the Black Swan, in Bishopsgate-street. On occasion of the Great Fire, in 1666, it was removed to the Two Black Pillars, in Brydges-street, Covent-garden; and afterwards to Sir Robert Viner's mansion, in Lombard-street, where it continued to September 23, 1829, when it was removed to a new and spacious office erected for the purpose on the site of an ancient college and sanctuary in *St. Martin's le Grand*.

This magnificent building was commenced in 1825, from designs by R. Smirke, Esq., and completed in 1829. It is of the Grecian Ionic order. The basement is of granite; but the building itself is of brick, entirely faced with Portland stone. It is 400 feet in length, and 80 in depth. In the centre of the front is a portico, consisting of six columns of Portland stone, resting on pedestals of granite. The vestibule, or great hall, occupying the centre of the building, forms a public thoroughfare from *St. Martin's le Grand* to Foster-lane. This hall is 80 feet long, 60 broad, and 53 feet high in the centre.

On the north side of the Hall are the several receiving-rooms for newspapers and inland and ship-letters; and behind these, further north, are the rooms for the inland-letter-sorters and letter-carriers. These rooms extend the whole length of the front, from the portico to the north wing; that for the letter-carriers is 35 feet in height.

The mails are received at the door in the east front, north of the hall, leading to the inland offices, and are taken into the tick-room, where the bags are opened. In this part of the building, also, are the West Indies, Comptroller's, and Mail Coach offices.

On the south side of the hall are the Foreign, Receiver-general's, and Accountant's offices. At the east end of the hall is the Two-penny Post Office, containing the Receiving, Sorters', and Carriers' rooms. A novel mode has been adopted for conveying letters, which have come to the wrong department, from one room to another: they are placed in small wagons beneath the pavement of the hall, and made to travel through a tunnel by machinery.

On the upper stories are sleeping-rooms for the foreign clerks, who are liable to be called to duty on the arrival of the mails. The assistant-secretary resides at the southwest extremity of the building.

The basement story is rendered fire-proof by brick vaultings. It comprises rooms for the mail-guards, an armoury, and servants' offices. There is also some ingenious machinery for conveying coals to each story, and a simple means of forcing water to any part of the edifice in case of fire. The whole building is lighted with gas, of which there are nearly one thousand burners.

The regularity with which the business of the Post Office is conducted, is truly surprising. There are two periods of meeting in the day: one for the distribution of the letters that come up from the country, and another for the despatch of those that are to be sent down. The first commences at 6 in the morning, and the task is accomplished by half-past 8 or 9, except when the mails are delayed by the badness of the roads. The letters are counted, and the amount of postage taken, so as to check the accounts of the country post-masters; they are then examined, to tell whether the charges on them are accurate, stamped with the date, and arranged for the letter-carriers, to whom they are counted twice over. The postage is paid to the Receiver-general three times a-week, when the amount of each letter-carrier's delivery for every day is again checked.

The despatch of letters in the evening is conducted on the same admirable system as their distribution in the morning; the whole business being performed in three hours, from 5 to 8. The letters are first taken out of the receiving-house and arranged in different compartments, named after the mails sent out. This is done by the junior clerks, who thus acquire a perfect knowledge of the situation and distance of all the post towns; the senior clerks then mark on the letters the proper rate of postage, which they do at an average of one letter per second; and the letters are placed in boxes, labelled with the names of the towns. When the Receiving-office closes, the letters for each town are summed up, put in the bag, and a copy of the amount sent with them. The letter-bags, tied and sealed, are all delivered to the respective guards of the mail coaches by 8 o'clock.

According to a calculation made in the month of May, 1828, it appears that the daily average number of letters brought into London by twenty-four mails was 28,466; 15,359 of which were delivered east of Temple Bar, and 13,107 west of the same place, making, at the same daily rate, 170,802 letters each week; and 8,881,704 in the course of the year.

The following list shows the number of letters sent at the same period from various towns, together with their delivery east and west of Temple Bar.

	Total.	East.	West.		Total.	East.	West.
Liverpool . . .	552	406	146	Cambridge . .	294	145	149
Bath	529	226	303	Leeds	246	191	55
Birmingham .	475	535	140	Cheltenham .	232	100	132
Manchester . .	458	353	105	York	152	80	72
Glasgow	349	344	105	Sheffield . . .	142	105	37
Oxford	272	117	155	Newmarket . .	98	30	68

The following regulation for the advantage of merchants and manufacturers, is perhaps not generally known.—“Every cover containing patterns or samples of goods, not exceeding one ounce, shall be charged only as a single letter, if sent open at the sides, and without any letter, or writing therewith, other than the name of the person sending the same, the place of his abode, and the price of the article.”

The Two-PENNY, or as it was called when first established, the Penny-Post was set up in the year 1683, by a private individual, for the conveyance of letters and small parcels; and to his assigns, government allowed an income of 200*l.* per annum for life, in place of the revenue arising from it. It is said, however, that after a trial in the Court of King's Bench, the projectors had the mortification to find this office adjudged to belong to the Duke of York, as a branch of the General Post Office.

The first notice of the Penny Post, however, in the Statute-book, occurs in the 9th year of the reign of Queen Anne, when it was very essentially improved, although it may be said to have been originally instituted in 1683.

By the Two-penny Post, any letter or parcel, not exceeding four ounces in weight, can be conveyed to any distance within three miles of the General Post-Office for the charge of two-pence. To any place beyond this distance, and not in the list of places to which the General Post extends, the charge is three-pence.

The number of letters delivered by the Two-penny Post, is about 40,000 daily, or 12,529,000 in the year. If this be added to the delivery of the General Post, it makes a total yearly amount of 21,510,704 letters, or about 413,000

each week. The number of letters delivered annually by the Paris Post Office, is about fourteen millions and a half, of which about nine millions and a quarter come from the departments.

It may be observed, that few institutions afford more advantages than that of Posts. Indeed their usefulness, not to say necessity, in commercial concerns, is too obvious to admit of any doubt; and the assistance they render to political transactions is little less apparent. But it is in the more confined and humble scenes of social life, that they spread comfort and joy, with a liberality which we seldom hear sufficiently acknowledged; although to them, the absent parent, child, and friend, are repeatedly indebted for the removal of anxiety and the solace of dejection.

The paper messengers of friends,
For absence almost make amends.

HAPPINESS.

It is a happy world after all.—The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence.

In a spring noon, or a summer evening, on whichever side I turn my eyes, myriads of happy beings crowd upon my view. “The insect youth are on the wing.” Swarms of new-born flies are trying their pinions in the air. Their sportive motions, their wanton mazes, their gratuitous activity, their continual change of place without use or purpose, testify their joy, and the exultation which they feel in their lately-discovered faculties. A bee amongst the flowers in spring, is one of the most cheerful objects that can be looked upon. Its life appears to be all enjoyment; so busy, and so pleased; yet it is only a specimen of insect life, with which, by reason of the animal being half domesticated, we happen to be better acquainted than we are with that of others.

Other species are *running about*, with an alacrity in their motions, which carries with it every mark of pleasure. Large patches of ground are sometimes half covered with these brisk and sprightly natures. If we look to what the waters produce, shoals of the fry of fish frequent the margins of rivers, of lakes, and of the sea itself. These are so happy, that they know not what to do with themselves. Their attitudes, their vivacity, their leaps out of the water, their frolics in it (which I have noticed a thousand times with equal attention and amusement), all conduce to show their excess of spirits, and are simply the effects of that excess. Walking by the sea-side, in a calm evening, upon a sandy shore, and with an ebbing tide, I have frequently remarked the appearance of a dark cloud, or rather, very thick mist, hanging over the edge of the water, to the height, perhaps, of half a yard, and of the breadth of two or three yards, stretching along the coast as far as the eye could reach, and always returning with the water. When this cloud came to be examined, it proved to be nothing else than so much space, filled with young shrimps, in the act of bounding into the air from the shallow margin of the water, or from the wet sand. If any motion of a mute animal could express delight it was this: if they had meant to make signs of their happiness they could not have done it more intelligibly. Suppose then, what I have no doubt of, each individual of this number to be in a state of positive enjoyment; what a sum, collectively, of gratification and pleasure have we here before our view.—PALEY.

ON RAIN.

BEHOLD how lovely shine the gems of rain,
Like sparkling diamonds on the glittering plain;
How, hanging on the flow'ring shrubs they blaze,
And dart beneath the leaves their silver rays.
The plants refresh'd, their flowers to Heaven disclose,
As grateful for the good its hand bestows.

THE KANGAROO BEETLE.

THE various tribes of insects, particularly the Beetles, present more extraordinary forms than any other portion of animated nature. The little real knowledge we possess of their habits, makes it very improbable that we shall ever be able properly to appreciate the wisdom of the Creator in furnishing them with so peculiar an arrangement of parts; but that this has been done for the benefit of the individual, we cannot have the least reason to doubt. To some, a terrific appearance may have been given for the purpose of deterring their enemies; and the hard shell of the Beetle affords an excellent protection for its tender body, against the attacks of other more powerful creatures.

The Mole Cricket is furnished with a very strong pair of legs in front; the last joint of which is made much in the form of the fore-legs of the mole, and in both cases, turned sideways like the human hand. In this case, there is not the least doubt, that this peculiarity is for the purpose of assisting the animal in working its way in its passage underground, and it is possible, that the enormous hinder legs of the insect here figured, may be applied to some such purpose.



The Kangaroo Beetle.

The same peculiarity of form has been the means of giving it a name, from its bearing a remote resemblance to the kangaroo of New South Wales. It is supposed to be a native of South America; but little is known to a certainty, of the place from which it comes.

Beetles of most kinds perform the same office as the vultures, and assist to clear the earth of putrid substances, which they either devour at once, or bury with great dexterity; a curious instance of this is to be found in the burying beetle, by whose exertions the body of a dead mole is removed to several inches under the surface of the ground, in an incredibly short space of time, when the size of the insect is taken into consideration. The number of known species of this tribe is very great; in England alone they amount to not less than 4000; and, in some of the hot climates, the land absolutely swarms with them.

THE COMMERCIAL EXPEDITION TO AFRICA.
II.

IN continuation of a former paper on the Commercial Expedition which lately sailed for the river Niger, we now give a copy of the letter which has been prepared for the purpose of announcing to the Native Chiefs the objects of our countrymen in visiting their respective territories, and of opening a friendly communication with the several states and tribes with whom it may be found desirable to traffic.

The original letter is written in Arabic, by Mr. ABRAHAM SALAME, the Egyptian, who acted as Interpreter to Lord Exmouth, in his negotiations with the Dey of Algiers, after the celebrated battle in which that chief was so severely chastised by the British Admiral. Our copy is taken from a literal translation into English, by the writer of the original letter. The copies taken out by Mr. Lander, for circulation among the chiefs, are handsomely printed upon broad sheets of coloured paper, and decorated with engravings of steam-vessels.

"Praise be to God alone, there is neither power nor authority but in God.

"From the slaves of God, Richard Lander, Macgregor Laird, Thomas Briggs, and their coadjutors, servants of the King of the English, to our dear friend in God, the monarch or Prince (Lord of this country), salutation be unto you, together with the mercy and blessings of God.

"Hence, after presenting our perfect salutation and due respect and regard to you, we have to inform you (may God inform you of all good news!) that His Majesty, our Great King, did send several times previously, some of his Captains and great men into the countries of Africa and Sudan, for the purpose of seeing their rivers, their wonders, and all the marvellous things that are to be found in them, and which are not to be found in our country.

"On their return, they reported to him (the King) all the kindness, and good deeds, and protection, which they received from you, and from the people of your countries; and that they were permitted to come back with articles of merchandise for the purpose of trading with all safety upon the faith of God, and on the faith of his Apostles, accompanied by your protection.

"This was spread among the people of the wide countries, who were gladdened on hearing it. Our Great King was also delighted, and praised your good deeds towards his servants. Whereupon he felt desirous of establishing a friendly intercourse between you and him, for the purpose of benefiting by trading, both the people of your countries and those of his.

"We are, therefore, come now in the great sea Quôrn, with two vessels of our said King, with the intention of selling, buying, and trading. And we have brought with us articles of merchandise of the manufacture of our country, for disposing of, or exchanging them for Elephants' Teeth, and such other articles as your countries produce, and which are not to be found in our own.

"We are come to be with you upon every good feeling of peace and amity, upon the faith of God, and on the faith of his Apostles. We, therefore, desire of you protection, hospitality, and safety, both to us and to our people, either in selling or in buying; especially, because we are your guests; 'for the guest is always respected for the sake of God.'

"We are ready to pay you the customs and gifts that are generally expected from all the merchants and dealers that trade in your markets, according to equity and justice. We are ready to observe all your laws and regulations, therefore, you must do us no injury, and we will not harm you; because we do not wish any thing but wealth and advantage to your country and to ours, as well as profit to your people and to ours.

"And after the termination of our trading, and the completion of our selling and buying, we will return in peace to our country, and import to you the things which you may desire, and such articles of merchandise as the people of your countries are fond of, if God be pleased, for the sake of continuing friendship and harmony between you and our King, and by the assistance of the generous God, wealth and profit will be increased both to your advantage and our own.—Amen.

"Dated in the year 1248 of the Hegira, which corresponds with the year of our Lord, 1832."

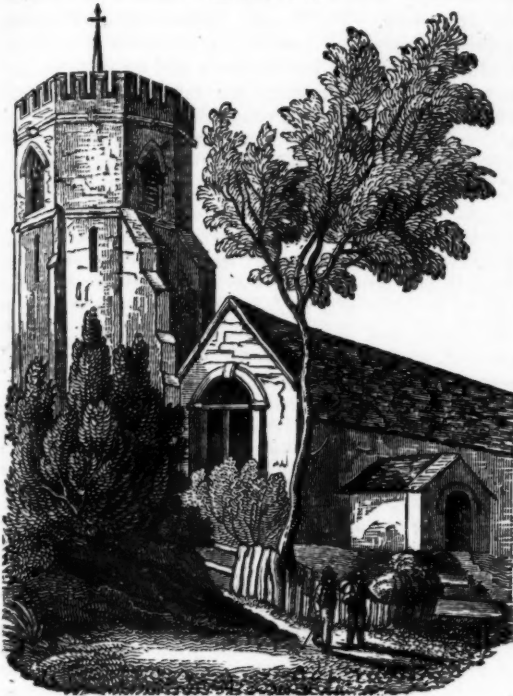
SUNDAY THOUGHT.

TIPP'D by the sun's emerging beams,
How bright the village spire;
Contrasted with yon cloud, it seems
A lamp of living fire.

So shines thy sun of mercy, Lord,
Affliction to illumine;
Reflected from Thy Holy Word,
When all beside is gloom.—TOWNSEND.

HODNET CHURCH.—BISHOP HEBER.

I SAT down upon an old bench of heavy black oak, in the rector's chancel of Hodnet Church. The day was very beautiful; it was one of those mild sunny days that come, many of them together, before the blackthorn blossoms and the sharp east wind sets in, making a second, though a short-lived, winter.



Hodnet Church.

Through the Gothic archway of the little chancel-door, all seemed bright and cheerful in the open air; the atmosphere full of golden light, the springing grass in the church-yard, the young, fresh leaves just opening, the ceaseless cawing of the busy rooks in the high trees about Hodnet Hall, and the sweet songs of a hundred joyous birds.

The solemn quietness and mellowed light within the church were better suited to my mood. I was thinking of Reginald Heber. It was in that church that he had led the worship of the great congregation, during the period of his ministry in England, until he was made bishop of Calcutta. How often had his untravelled heart turned to his beloved parishioners in dear, dear Hodnet; and, doubtless, that country church, and the old familiar faces there, had often and often risen up before him, and been welcomed with blessings from his kind and loving heart. I thought of his farewell sermon in the midst of his sorrowing flock, and of the affecting description given of his departure from Hodnet.

"From a range of high grounds near Newport, he turned back to catch a last view of his beloved Hodnet; and here the feelings, which he had hitherto suppressed in tenderness to others, burst forth unrestrained, and he uttered the words, which have proved prophetic, that he 'should return to it no more!'"

As I thought of him, I blessed that gracious Master, who, in calling his servant from the charge of a few sheep in this quiet and remote spot, to make him the shepherd of the flocks upon a thousand pastures, had so graciously fitted him for his high calling, not only bestowing upon him many splendid gifts, but those meek and lowly graces, without which no gifts of genius could have made him fit to be the

minister of Him, who is at once meek and lowly in heart, and the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. I thought of that which has always appeared to me the most blessed assurance of his growth in grace, and his ripeness for eternity,—the Prayer found, after his departure, in his book of private devotions, bearing the date of the 28th of March. (He entered into his rest on the 3rd of April.)

"Oh, my Father, my Master, my Saviour, and my King, unworthy and wicked as I am, reject me not as a polluted vessel; but so quicken me by Thy Spirit from the death of sin, that I may walk in newness of life before Thee! Convert me first, O Lord! that I may be the means in Thy hand of strengthening my brethren! Convert me, that I may be blessed to the conversion of many! Yea, convert me, O Jesus! for mine own sins' sake, and the greatness of my undeserving before Thee, that I, who need Thy mercy most, may find it in most abundance! Lord! I believe—help Thou mine unbelief! Lord! I repent—help Thou mine impenitence! Turn Thou me, O Lord, and so shall I be turned! Be favourable unto me, and I shall live! and let what remaineth of my life be spent in Thy service, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever! Amen."

On the side wall of the southern chancel, just beyond and just above the very spot where the good rector of Hodnet had so often stood, is a tablet of white marble, upon which the finely-shaped head and intelligent features of Reginald Heber have been cut in bold relief by Chantrey.

I have had more facilities than a mere visiter would have had for learning something of the history of Hodnet Church, but very slender materials are to be found at the place itself. Leland's description of it in one word exactly suits it now: "Hodnet, a townlet." It is neither a village nor a town, but consists of little more than two streets of irregular buildings. At the upper end of the higher street stands the church. The whole church-yard and many parts of the "townlet" are bedded on a huge mass of red sand-stone rock. The church is built of the same kind of rock.

The name of Hodnet, or, as it was anciently written, Odenett, was taken from Odo, probably the father of Baldwyn, the lieutenant of the celebrated Roger, first earl of Shrewsbury (or Schreobesbury) and Montgomery at the time of the Conquest. For five generations, the Hodnets owned the lordship, and church, and lands bearing their name, till in the reign of Edward the Second, Matilda de Hodnet, the heiress of the whole property, bestowed her hand and all the wealth of her ancestors on William de Ludlowe of Stokesay, near Ludlow, knight. Their descendants for seven generations were possessors of the demesne. The largest part of Hodnet Hall was built by them in the fourteenth century, and finished by the Vernons in the sixteenth. The Vernons, a noble family, originally from Vernon in Normandy, intermarried with the Ludlows some years after the battle of Shrewsbury, and succeeded to the estate on the failure of the Ludlows. In the Vernons it remained till 1754, when the male line failed, and the property passed to bishop Heber's grandfather, who descended from them in the female line.

The work of spoliation seems to have been carried on at Hodnet with a bold and reckless hand during the Rebellion. The rector, Dr. John Arnway, being devotedly attached to the royal cause, was driven from Hodnet by the garrison of Wenn. His rectory and his books were burnt, and not merely to the rector, and his own personal possessions, did this persecution extend,—the church was stripped of its ancient memorials, even the registers were destroyed. Dr. Arnway has related part of his sufferings in two little pieces called *The Tablet*, and *An Alarm*. In one

of them he says, "they offered me 400*l.* per annum, sweetened with the commendation of my abilities to bow to it (meaning the covenant.) I replied I had rather cast my staff and tackling all overboard to save my passenger and pinnance (soul and body) than sink my passenger and pinnance to preserve my staff and tackling." Again he complains that his persecutors left him not a Bible of his library to comfort him, nor a sheaf of his means to nourish him, nor a suit of his clothes to cover him, nor use of common air to refresh him. He lost a large fortune, which he did not lament in his extremest penury, and never recovered either his books or papers, but after being imprisoned and very ill-used, he fled first to the Hague, and then to Virginia, where he died in poverty before the Restoration. "He was a very worthy and excellent man; he yearly clothed a certain number of poor old people (I think they were twelve), and dined as many every Sunday at his table; and his loyalty kept pace with his charity, for he furnished out no less than eight troopers for his majesty's service, which alone is sufficient to account for the true reason of all his troubles."

The spacious church is divided into two broad aisles and chancels by a row of six pillars, five of them circular, and one octangular, running lengthways the whole extent of the building, and supporting five circular and two pointed arches; the capitals of the pillars are without any ornament. The ceilings of the north and south chancels are panelled with dark oak, and small, but flowered, bosses. The royal arms are painted between the south aisle and the chancel, with the date 1660. The church is dedicated to St. Oswald. At the principal entrance is a small oaken box for alms, with two locks, and the words "Remember the poor" in raised carving upon the front of it.

Hodnet church is said to have been built by Sir Rowland Hill, in the reign of Henry the Eighth. I suspect it was rather rebuilt in parts than built by him. The tower is octagonal, and said to be Norman. The font is very old and grotesque. In the broad and lofty mullioned window that fills up the whole eastern end of the northern chancel, there are one or two fragments of coloured glass, no more. Beneath this window stands a reading-desk, of carved oak, to which some old books are fastened with chains.

Hodnet is worthy of notice, as being the native parish of the high and truly honourable family of the Hills, of Hawkstone. The family vault, bearing the date of A.D. 1500, is beneath the pavement of the north chancel. There are several monuments in Hodnet Church, sacred to the memory of members of this excellent and much-respected family.

In a corner, where it cannot be generally seen, is the monumental tablet of Sir Richard Hill, the elder brother of that generation of which the Rev. Rowland Hill is now the only survivor.

A curious circumstance is worthy of note, as connected with Hodnet Church. The sum of 2*l.* 15*s.* 2*d.* is paid yearly, according to some old agreement, by the rector of Hodnet, to the Pendrills of Boscobel, the family in whose house Charles the Second was concealed. Perhaps the patron in those days, as well as the rector, Dr. Arnway, was devotedly attached to the royal fugitive, and consented to pay off part of the king's debt of gratitude, by allowing such a tax to be laid on the income of the living of Hodnet.

[Abridged from an Article in the *British Magazine*.]

For every hundred persons employed in agriculture, there are in Italy 31 non-agriculturists; in France, 50; and in England, 270.—BABBAGE.

SCRIPTURE DIFFICULTIES.

THE Jewish Rabbis, in their comments on Scripture, so oft as they met with hard and intricate texts, out of which they could not wrest themselves, were wont to shut up their discourse with this: "When Elias comes, he will explain this difficulty." Not the Jews only, but the learned Christians, in all ages, have found many things in Scripture, which wait for such an interpreter. For, besides those texts of Scripture which, by reason of the hidden treasures of wisdom, and depth of sense and mystery laid up in them, are not yet understood, there are many things of time and place, and apparent contrariety, which bring vast obscurity to the text. The Areopagites, in Athens, when they were troubled in a doubtful case, in which they durst not proceed to give sentence, were wont to put off the cause for a day of hearing some hundred years after,—avoiding, by this means, further importunity with the suit. In such doubts of Scripture, it will be our best way to put them to some day of hearing afar off,—even till *that great day*,—till Christ, our true Elias, shall come, who, at his coming, shall answer all our doubts, and settle all our waverings.

Meanwhile, till our Elias come, in places of ambiguous and doubtful, or dark and intricate meaning, it is sufficient if we religiously admire, acknowledge, and confess; maintaining neither side, reprobating neither side; but rather recalling ourselves from such bold presumption. To understand, belongs to Christ, the Author of our faith; to us is sufficient the glory of believing. It is not depth of knowledge, nor knowledge of antiquity, nor sharpness of wit, nor authority of councils, nor the name of the church, can settle the restless conceits that possess the minds of many doubting Christians. Only to ground our faith on the plain incontrovertible text of Scripture, and, for the rest, to wait and pray for the coming of our Elias; this shall compose our waverings, and give final rest unto our souls.—HALES.

LIBERTY AND LICENTIOUSNESS.—There is a very peculiar contrariety between those vices which consist in excess, and the virtues of which they are said to be the excess and resemblance, and whose names they affect to bear; the excess of any thing being always to its hurt, and tending to its destruction. In this manner, licentiousness is, in its very nature, *a present infringement upon liberty, and dangerous to it for the future*. A particular man may be licentious without being less free; but a community cannot: since the licentiousness of one will unavoidably break in upon the liberty of another. Civil liberty, the liberty of a community, is a severe, and a restrained thing; implies, in the very notion of it, authority, settled subordinations, subjection and obedience; and is altogether as much hurt by too little of this kind as by too much. *The love of liberty that is not a real principle of dutiful behaviour to authority is as hypocritical as the religion that is not productive of a good life.*—BP. BUTLER.

SELDEN had once intended to give his library to the University of Oxford, and had left it so by his will; but, having occasion for a manuscript, which belonged to their library, they asked of him the customary bond of £1000 for its restitution: this he took so ill at their hands, that he struck out that part of his will by which he had given them his library, and with some passion declared that they should never have it. The executors (of whom Sir Matthew Hale was one) stuck at this a little, but, having considered better of it, came to this resolution; that they were to be the executors of Mr. Selden's will, and not of his passion:—so they made good what he had intended in cold blood, and passed over what his passion had suggested to him.

This collection of books, at the time, was valued at some thousands of pounds, and now forms a valuable part of the magnificent Bodleian Library at Oxford.

THE TABLE OF SHEW BREAD.

AT the time of the conquest of Spain by the Arabs, the Moslem general, Taric, found, near Toledo, a rich precious table, adorned with hyacinths and emeralds. Gelif Aledris, in his description of Spain, calls this remarkable piece of antiquity, "THE TABLE OF SOLOMON, SON OF DAVID." This table is supposed to have been saved by the Jews, with other precious and sacred vessels, from the pillage of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, and brought with those fugitives who found their way to Spain. Indeed, some writers do not hesitate to assert, that there is little doubt of this having been the original "TABLE OF SHEW BREAD," made by Solomon, spoken of in the Book of KINGS, and by Josephus; and which, with the candlestick and the altar of incense, constituted the three wonders of the temple.

That table which Titus brought with him on his triumphal return to Rome, was clearly not the same: for when the city and temple, after the destruction, were rebuilt by the order of Cyrus, the sacred vessels were made anew; similar indeed to the old, but of inferior excellence.

A CHILD'S EVENING THOUGHTS.

ALL the little flowers I see,
Their tiny eyes are closing;
The birds are roosting on the tree;
The lambkins are reposing.
The sun, where that dull streak of red
Is faintly glimmering still;
They say, has gone to seek his bed,
Behind the purple hill.
And I, through all the quiet night,
Must sleep the hours away,—
That I may waken fresh and bright,
To live another day.
And well I know whose lips will smile,
And pray for me, and bless me;
And who will talk to me, the while
Her gentle hands undress me.
She'll tell me, there is One above,
Upon a glorious throne,
Who loves me with a tender love,
More tender than her own.
He made the sun, and stars, and skies,
The pretty shrubs and flowers,
And all the birds and butterflies,
That flutter through the bowers.
He keeps them underneath his wings,
And there they safely rest;
Yet, though they're bright and lovely things,
He loves us far the best.
For, when the birds and flowers are dead,
Their little life is past;
But, though we die, yet he has said,
Our life shall always last.
And we shall live with him in heaven;
For he has sent his Son
To die, that we may be forgiven
The sins that we have done.
He'll make my heart grow like his own,
All loving, good, and mild;
For he will send his Spirit down,
And take me for his child.
Then happily I'll lie and sleep,
Within my little nest;
For well I know that he will keep
His children while they rest.—E. S. R. A.

AFFECTATION is the greatest enemy both of doing well, and good acceptance of what is done. I hold it the part of a wise man, to endeavour rather that Fame may follow him than go before him.—BISHOP HALL.

You complain that you cannot pray. At least, then, you have one petition that you are bound to offer.—T. K. A.

BAMBOROUGH CASTLE.

THE Castle of Bamborough is situated in the county of Northumberland, about five miles to the east of Belford, and 359 north from London. It stands upon an almost perpendicular rock overlooking the sea, and about 150 feet above its level. A stately tower, the only original part of this once famous strong-hold that now exists, appears to have been built on the remains of some ancient edifice which once, perhaps, formed one of a chain of fortresses raised by the Romans to protect this part of the coast, when they were in possession of the northern portion of the Island.

Bamborough Castle is said to have been erected in the year 559, by the Northumbrian king Ina, and formerly possessed great strength; in many instances becoming the place of refuge for the kings, earls, and governors of Northumberland, in troublesome times.

In the year 642, it was besieged by Penda, the pagan king of Mercia, who, not satisfied with the victories he had already gained, endeavoured to destroy the castle itself by fire. "He laid vast quantities of wood under the walls, to which he set fire, as soon as the wind was favourable; but no sooner was it in a flame, than the wind changed, and carried it into his own camp, and forced him to raise the siege.

In 705, Osred, the son of Alfred the Great, shut himself up within its walls when pursued (after his father's death) by the rebel Edulph. The castle suffered greatly by the fury of the Danes, in 933; but was afterwards repaired, and esteemed the strongest fortress in the county. William the Second besieged this place in person, when Robert Mowbray, earl of Northumberland, took refuge there after his treasonable acts. At the appearance of the king, the earl made his escape, but was afterwards taken prisoner; still, however, Morel, his steward and kinsman, defended it against all the king's forces.—"The king had turned the siege into a blockade, and raised a fortress near it called *Malvoisin*—(Bad Neighbour) some time before the earl fled. Morel still held out with such great resolution, that the king had recourse to policy, to effect that which he had failed to accomplish by force. He ordered the earl to be led up to the walls, and a declaration to be made, that if the castle was not surrendered, his eyes should be instantly put out.—This threat succeeded; Morel no sooner beheld his kinsman in this imminent danger, than he consented to yield up the castle to the king. For the servant's sake, probably, the incensed sovereign spared the life of the master, but kept him a prisoner in Windsor Castle, where he remained for thirty years."

In 1463, Bamborough Castle was taken and retaken, several times, by the generals of Edward the Fourth, and Henry the Sixth; and a little before the Battle of Hexham, Sir Ralph Grey, the governor, surrendered to the earl of Warwick: during these conflicts, the damage done to the building was very extensive. Since this time it appears in several instances to have been used as a state prison.

After having been a long time in the possession of the crown, it became the property of a family of the name of Foster, from whom it was purchased by Lord Crew, bishop of Durham. This prelate died on the 18th of September, 1720, in the 88th year of his age, and left the castle, together with the estates of Bamborough, to charitable uses. In 1757, the trustees repaired the great tower, and applied it and the funds of the estate to the purposes of the will. Pennant, who visited this part of the coast in the year 1777, gives the following account of this munificent bequest.



Bamborough Castle

"The castle, and the manor belonging to it, was once the property of the Fosters, but purchased by Lord Crew, bishop of Durham, and with other considerable estates, left vested in trustees, to be applied to unconfined charitable uses. Three of these trustees are a majority; one of them makes this place his residence, and blesses the coast by his judicious and humane application of the prelate's generous bequest. He has repaired and rendered habitable the great square tower. The part reserved for himself and family is the large hall, and a few smaller apartments, but the rest of the spacious edifice is allotted for purposes, which make the heart to glow with joy when thought of.

"The upper part is an ample granary, from whence corn is dispensed to the poor without distinction, even in the dearest time, at the rate of four shillings the bushel; and the distressed, for many miles round, often experience the convenience of this benefaction.

"Other apartments are fitted up for shipwrecked sailors, for thirty of whom bedding is provided, should such a number happen to be cast ashore at the same time. A constant patrol is kept, every stormy night, along this tempestuous coast, for above eight miles, (the extent of the manor,) by which numbers of lives have been preserved.

"It often happens that ships strike in such a manner on the rocks as to be capable of relief, in case numbers of people could be suddenly assembled, to render the necessary assistance. For this purpose, a cannon is fixed on the top of the tower, which is fired once, if the accident happen in such a quarter; twice, if in another; and thrice, if in such a place. By these signals, the country-people are directed to the spot they are to fly to, and frequently preserve, not only the crew, but even the vessel; for machines of different kinds are always in readiness to heave ships out of their perilous situations.

"So extensive a charity, to flow from a private bounty, is singular; men, in former ages, were canonized for trifling acts of benevolence, compared to this. But, although the resources were given by Lord Crew, yet the disposition was not of his arrangement. To the benevolent heart of the Rev. Dr. Sharp, the chief part of the blessings derived from his lordship's will is to be attributed."

Since the above account was written, life-boats (by the means of which so many lives have of late years been saved) have been added to the establishment, and the utility of the charity has been materially increased.

THE cotton of Java is conveyed in junks to the coast of China, but from the seed not being previously separated, three-quarters of the weight thus carried is not cotton. This might, perhaps, be justified in Java, by the want of machinery to separate the seed, or by the relative cost of the operation in the two countries. But the cotton itself, as packed by the Chinese, occupies three times the bulk of an equal quantity shipped by Europeans for their own markets. Thus the freight of a given quantity of cotton costs the Chinese nearly twelve times the price to which, by a proper attention to mechanical methods, it might be reduced.

—BABBAGE.

GOOD FOR EVIL.—An old man, of the name of Guyot, lived and died in the town of Marseilles; he amassed a large fortune by the most laborious industry and the severest habits of abstinence and privation. The populace pursued him, whenever he appeared, with hootings and execrations. In his will, there were found the following words:—"Having observed, from my infancy, that the poor of Marseilles are ill-supplied with water, which can only be purchased at a great price, I have cheerfully laboured, the whole of my life, to procure for them this great blessing; and I direct that the whole of my property shall be laid out in building an aqueduct for their use."—*Thoughts on Laughter.*

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.—Let us take notice of the great variety of creatures, which are made for our use; some for labour, some for food, some for clothing, some for pleasure. At the same time let us remember, that our right in these creatures is not absolute; we hold them from God, and He can deprive us of them, whenever He sees fit, and when ever we abuse them:—and therefore the spirit of God has given us this rule: "The merciful man is merciful to his beast." And whoever abuses any of God's creatures, or tortures them, or destroys such as are neither hurtful when they are alive, nor of use when they are killed, will have more to answer for than many usually think. —W. J. M.

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